

# RELIGIOUS INQUIRER.

COME NOW, AND LET US REASON TOGETHER.—ISAIAH 1. 18.

PUBLISHED BY AN ASSOCIATION OF GENTLEMEN.

VOL. III.]

HARTFORD, (CONN.) FEBRUARY 21, 1824.

[NO. 3.

*From the (Boston) Universalist Magazine.*

Some weeks ago we inserted an extract from Dr. MAHEW's Thanksgiving Sermons, delivered in 1782, from Psalms cxlv. 9, "The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works."

The following is another Extract from the same Sermons. On looking over these two Sermons, we are struck with astonishment and admiration, at the noble boldness of the author, considering the prejudices of the age in which he lived. That he was a Universalist no one can doubt, who recollects the extract lately published.

Secondly, That God is likewise good and kind to all the individuals of which these species consist. Every whale being made up of parts, and every species consisting of individuals only; it is not very easy for common sense to conceive how an whole, or a species can be kindly provided for by the God of all, as some have supposed,<sup>\*</sup> and yet the parts, the individuals, be disregarded and neglected by him. Is God the maker of the species only, not of the individuals? That were a very mysterious position; a curious discovery to match the other! Indeed, they must needs go together. For if God is supposed to be the maker of the individuals, it follows as undeniably from hence, that he will take care of individuals, as it does from his creating the species, that he will take care of the species. The reasoning that will hold with respect to one, will hold equally with respect to the other: If it fails in one, it will fail in the other also. And, as was hinted before, if individuals are neglected or overlooked, it is plain that the species themselves are not provided for, unless the species can be preserved, when all the individuals are left to perish! A providential care of the species, evidently involves the like care of the individuals thereof; at least of some of them. And if God takes care of some, why not of all? Is it too laborious a task for Him, that is at once omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent?

But how can God be said to be good to *all*?—how could it be affirmed, that his tender mercies are over *all* his works, if there were some of his creatures, his works, originally unprovided for? To say that this means only all the species of creatures, but not the individuals, is taking an unnatural and unwarrantable liberty with the holy scriptures, besides the absurdity of the very supposition itself, and the setting of bounds and limits to the divine goodness. Nay, would not this be to suppose God positively cruel to some of his creatures? There is no medium betwixt his being actually kind and merciful to all, and his being positively cruel and unmerciful to some. For, please to consider, that when God makes creatures capable of happiness and misery, in whatever degree; if he does not also make provision for their comfortable subsistence, and take a kind care of them, he of consequence dooms them to inevitable pain and misery, even without any fault of theirs; since if a creature is actually made, and preserved in a state of sensibility, it must be either in a degree of pleasure or pain. If it be not the former, it must of course be

the latter. And, upon the present supposition, this is wholly owing to God's not making that provision for the creature, which was absolutely necessary for its well-being, according to the nature given it by himself. Now, let some very acute distinguisher shew the difference betwixt this and positive cruelty: It would be in vain for an ordinary genius to attempt it. And when any one has fairly made out this distinction, he will probably be able to reconcile such a conduct in the Creator, with the express doctrine of scripture, that he "satisfieth the desire of every living thing." But,

It will perhaps be said, that the universal terms *all*, *every*, and the like, are sometimes used in a restrained, limited sense: And that there are plain reasons for, and an absolute necessity of, understanding them in this limited sense in many places of scripture. This is granted: But then, they ought never to be thus limited, but understood in their proper, natural and unconfined sense, unless there is positive reason, or some real necessity for such a limitation of them. Let any one who thinks it reasonable and necessary to limit the goodness and mercy of his Creator, shew it to be actually so, and I will then acknowledge the reasonableness and necessity of limiting the signification of those universal terms, in which he is declared to be good and merciful to *all*, to *every* living thing. For unless you can prove the former, it is impossible you should ever be able to prove the latter. Limiting the sense of these terms in the present case, is plainly limiting and setting bounds to that goodness, which is declared in and by them to be unlimited in its extent. Neither will any man, who really believes God to be good to *all*, ever desire to find out any reason for putting a restrained sense upon the term *all* in the text.

But let us, for a few minutes, take it for granted that *all*, here, does not literally mean *all*, or every individual; but that there are some individuals of every species to which God is **not** good—some of his works over which his mercy is **not** extended. How many then, of each species, shall we suppose in this situation—thus forgotten or neglected by him that made them?

Let us, for example, suppose one *half* of every species, thus abandoned by the "God and Father of all." I ask then, whether all these individuals, to which God is not good and merciful, must not inevitably be wretched; each of them being left destitute of a proper supply to its natural wants? No one can doubt of this. All, for whose well-being God makes no provision, must, of course, be miserable: For who besides Him can provide for them? I ask, in the next place, whether this supposition is consistent with the spirit and manifest design of the text; even though the term *all*, twice used therein, did not literally intend every individual? I ask, in the next place, whether the supposition, that one *half* of every species are thus abandoned to unavoidable misery by their Creator, is consistent with his acknowledged *general character*, as a good and merciful being? Is not this supposition highly, and very obviously repugnant to *that* character; and therefore, to the honor of God? It may again be demanded, whether they who think this to be the truth (if any such there are) do not, in effect, unite in their imaginations the two independent and opposite principles of the Manichaeans, the one good the other evil, into one self-contradictory being, whom they call, and whom they worship under the

\*Lord Bolingbroke.

name of the "One God and Father of all?" Let me ask once more, whether this supposition of one *half* of every species thus abandoned, be not a very *moderate* and *modest* supposition, according to the representations which some persons have given of God's conduct towards one of the most *considerable* species that we have any particular knowledge of?

But you will allow, perhaps, that the supposition of one *half*, is too large; that it is not agreeable to the text, to reason, or to the general idea of God as a good, kind and merciful being—"Half is, indeed, too many, and shocks the mind at once!"—I understand you well. Instead of saying one *half* then, we will say *only*, one *quarter*. Will this supposition stand the test? What! One *quarter* part of every species, both of sensitive and rational creatures, abandoned thus to inevitable misery by their Creator; and yet this same Creator declared in his own holy word, to be good to all!—A *quarter* of all God's creatures of every kind and order, are a great many, surely to be thus cast off and forsaken by Him, whose tender mercies are said to be over all his works!—If you consider, and recollect yourselves, I believe you will think the number still somewhat *too large*—What! a *quarter* part of the whole! But if you will not yet give this up, let me vary the language of the text a little, and paraphrase it so as precisely to express your sense of it, thus—"The Lord is good to *three quarters* of his creatures, and his tender mercies are over *three quarters* of all his works: But to the other *quarter* he is not good, kind or merciful; but leaves them to unavoidable misery and destruction."—Will you allow this to be a natural paraphrase, or to give the genuine sense of the text?—No: it sounds harshly; "and seems too much to limit the divine goodness."

Well then, let us suppose only a tenth, twentieth, fiftieth, hundredth, or, to cut the matter still shorter, only one *thousandth* part of the whole rational and sensitive creation, doomed to inevitable misery in the manner before expressed.—Will you abide by this?—Will you abate nothing of it?—When you consider the innumerable millions of creatures, many of them rational ones, that must, even on this supposition, be wretched, does it sit easy upon your minds?—Is not the number, in the whole, *too large* still? A *thousandth* part of all, of every species, in all worlds;—probably enough to people thousands of such worlds as this!—How can that be; and yet God be an exceeding good, kind and merciful being? I am persuaded that, upon reflection, you will stand to this.

Suppose then, but ten individuals, or five, nay, two only of every species, nay, but *one*; yet these must amount to a vast number. For the number of the species even in this little globe, is great; how prodigious then, must it probably be in all worlds taken collectively? And will not one individual of each of them, amount in the whole to too great a number to be thus doomed to unavoidable misery, by Him who gave them being? Is even this consistent with his acknowledged general character as a good and merciful Being? If you think soberly and impartially, you will choose rather to lessen the number still, than to defend this supposition.

Well then, suppose but a single individual of one species—Only let that be a reasonable creature, capable by nature of knowing and enjoying God eternally, whom he never displeased by any act of his!—No—it shall be but an irrational creature, and that of the very lowest, the most inferior species, that is thus doomed to all the pain which it is in its nature capable of enduring.—And can you seriously think that the Creator and "Father of all," has pitched upon this poor mite, to make the existence which himself gave, wretched! Why? sin it could not: And is it agreeable to wisdom, goodness and mercy, to make an *innocent* creature miserable through the whole term of its existence, whether longer or shorter?—If you are resolved to defend even this lowest of all suppositions which the

nature of the question admits, you should, I think, paraphrase the text thus—"The Lord is good to all *but one*, and his tender mercies are over all his works, *excepting a single* insignificant creature, which either escapes his notice, or at which he is angry, and so makes it miserable, though it neither has, nor is capable of offending Him." How do you like this paraphrase? You must needs adopt one to this purpose, if you oppose what I am endeavouring to establish;—the universal goodness and mercy of God, in the highest and most literal sense of the terms "all," and "every living thing," used in scripture with express reference to the extent of his goodness.

Our Lord Jesus Christ speaking of those *sparrows*, "five of which were sold for two farthings," says that "*not one* of them is forgotten before God." Luke xii. 6. This may doubtless be said with equal truth, even of creatures inferior to sparrows. And one need not scruple to say, that the supposition of any of them being forgotten, forsaken and abandoned by him, in the sense so often mentioned, is dishonorable to God; an unworthy imputation upon his wisdom, goodness, mercy, and his providential care respecting a creature which he thought proper to call into existence. So that though some things and creatures, of which I have been speaking, are in one view, indeed, *very* inconsiderable; yet the end pursued all along is of the last importance. But if it would be dishonorable to God, to charge him with treating only one of the *most inferior* of his creatures in such a manner, what shall we think of that doctrine, which represents him as treating *millions* of *millions* of his rational creatures after the *same manner*?—or rather, after a manner almost infinitely harder to be reconciled with wisdom, goodness and mercy!—I will not say, what ought to be thought of it; but leave it to your calm and serious reflections.

From the Philadelphia Reformer.

#### NEW ENGLAND CLERGY, OR "BUILDING THE OLD WASTES."

*Lyman Beecher* has again come before the public in a sermon preached at the installation of the "Rev." John Keys, to the pastoral care of the church in Woolcot, Conn. in which he treats of the desolations of his own sect in that state: the means of restoring them; and the motives to immediate exertion for that purpose. "The whole sermon," says the *Boston Recorder*, "possesses an excellence which places it above any commendation of ours." And a correspondent to the same paper, tells us, "It is a sermon of no ordinary merit, and demands the candid and prayerful attention of ministers and churches throughout New-England."

TEXT. "And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations."

Speaking of the desolations which have taken place, not in Zion, but in his own once powerful sect in Connecticut, Mr. Beecher says:

"The immediate causes are, evidently, the difference of religious sentiment and worship, which prevails. \*\*\* There is not, in the state, a town or parish, unable to support the gospel constantly, and with ease, provided all the families in the limits of each, were of one heart, and of one way to serve the Lord.\* But the property, in many societies, [parishes] is divided between three or four different denominations. [This is a sore evil to Lyman Beecher and his party, and he tells us] The consequence is, the decline, and, in some cases, the entire subversion of that religious order which our fathers established."

He proceeds: "But, by what causes has this change been

\* If Mr. Beecher had the power, would he not make use of something else besides arguments to bring them all to be of this "one way?"

accomplished, in the religious opinions and habits of people? The fathers of Connecticut came here on purpose to establish, and perpetuate that religious order which is still, the prevailing order of the state. They were united in their views of doctrine and discipline; were strongly attached to the religious order they had established; and with singular wisdom provided for its perpetuity. Believing godliness to be profitable to the life that now is, and ignorance and irreligion to be crimes against the state, they required every society [parish] by law, to support the gospel, and *every family to contribute its proportion and attend stately upon its ministrations.*\*

"This organized, for more than a century Zion was a city compactly builded, and friends and foes might, with different emotions, 'go round about her, and tell her towers, and mark her bulwarks, and consider her palaces.' By what causes, then, have these changes been accomplished? The most efficacious are, doubtless remote, have operated silently and slowly, and produced their results at periods so distant as almost to elude observation."\*\* For more than one hundred years, the pastors and churches of Connecticut were strictly evangelical; but at length, different views concerning doctrine began to prevail. Those precious doctrines, which are the power of God to salvation, were, of course, first omitted, at length openly opposed. The consequence was, that 'the love of many waxed cold, and the ways of Zion mourned, because few came to her solemn feasts.'

Why not come out on this subject, Mr. Beecher, in more plain terms, and tell us that Quakers, Baptists, Methodists, and Episcopalians, have been permitted to come into the state,† and preach their heretical doctrines, and draw away the people from the only evangelical and right way,—and then propose an immediate removal of the present rulers of the state and the election of such men as will again build up the walls of your Zion, and establish the old order of things, when every one shall be compelled by law to pay to the support of the old fashioned bigotted priests of Connecticut, and be subjected to a fine for refusing or neglecting to attend stately on their ministrations. When men can be found in this country who have the assurance to advance such sentiments, and editors and others feel no hesitancy in publicly applauding the sermon which contains them, and tell us it "possesses an excellence which places it above their commendation," are we in no danger from priestcraft? Verily, if we become not subjected to their rule it will not be for want of their endeavours to bring us to be so.

\* None were exempt from paying to the standing order of priests in Connecticut; and every one who absented himself from their preaching was subject to a fine, to be doubled after the first offence, every time a fine was incurred. These were glorious times for the priesthood of that day; just such as Mr. Beecher and others would, no doubt, wish to see again revived in that state and extended throughout the United States. From the applause rendered to this sermon, it is apparent, that too many in New England, would make common cause with the author of it in monopolizing the trade of preaching over the whole land for their own sect. Who, indeed, but they ought to be heard or allowed to instruct the people? If their prayers could prevail, our fate would soon be decided, and they would have dominion over us forever.

† The sentiments of President Oaks, of Harvard University, (Mass.) and those of Lyman Beecher, appear to be pretty much in unison. In an Election Sermon, delivered in 1673, he says: "The outcry of some is for liberty of conscience. This is the great Diana of the libertines of this age.—I look upon toleration as the first-born of all abominations. If it should be born and brought forth among us, you may call it GAD, and give the same reason that Leah did for the name of her son—Behold a troop cometh—a troop of all manner of abominations."

*From the (Portland) Christian Intelligencer.*

#### THE CHRISTIAN OPITULATOR.....No. VII.

##### WHAT IS THE TRUE SIGNIFICATION OF THE WORD HELL?

The next text in which this word is found, is in Prov. xxiii. 14, "Withhold not correction from the child, for if thou beatest him with a rod *he shall not die.* Thou shall beat him with a rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell." This, as will readily be perceived, is a piece of advice to parents, on the subject of family government. We are not to suppose indeed, that because a child may be obstinate and refractory, a severe whipping will give him claim to immortality and eternal life, and prevent his eternal misery. This would be to take away the glory of salvation from our Redeemer, and confer it on a rod. But chastisement from a parent is intended to have the same effect on his child, as the chastisement of our heavenly Parent must have on his imperfect offspring. In both, *obedience is the object*—this produces all those virtues, which, as we remarked in a former number, are necessary to a course of long and honourable life, and to save the child from debility, distress, an untimely death, and the grave (*hades,\**) all which, generally, follows a course of vice and criminality.

Prov. xxvii. 20, "Hell and destruction are never full, so the eyes of man are never satisfied." There is no shadow of proof here, in favour of endless misery. Should it be said, however, that proof is drawn from the circumstance of its not being full, (for this is the only descriptive expression in the text,) we reply, that if a thing not being full, proves it to be a place of future everlasting distress, then there must be a great many such places; for there are a multitude of things that never are, and *never will be* full. Hell, here, means simply the *grave*, whose voracious appetite, greedily devours the human family, and yet never says "*enough.*" Death bids mortals to depart and the wide yawning mouth of the *grave* devours her "daily millions at a meal."

Isaiah v. 13, 14, "My people are gone into captivity because they have no knowledge, and *their* honourable men are famished, and *their* multitude dried up with thirst. Therefore hell hath enlarged herself and opened her mouth without measure, and *their* glory, and *their* multitude and *their* pomp and he that rejoiceth, *shall descend into it.*" Will any one say that the *hell* here mentioned means a place for eternal misery? If so, "*the people of God*" must go away into everlasting torment! Whatever this means, it cannot mean this. It cannot mean that the elect, or the converted people of God shall suffer eternal distress. The signification of the word in this passage, concurs with what has been given before. It signifies the *grave*.

Isaiah xiv. 9–15, "Hell (or "the grave," see margin) from beneath is moved for thee (Lucifer, king of Babylon) to meet thee at thy coming; it stretcheth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth, it has raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit." No one can misunderstand so plain a reference to the *grave* as this. It requires no comment,

Isaiah xxviii. 15, Speaking to the rulers of Jerusalem: "Because ye have said, we have made a covenant with death, and with *hell* are we at agreement, therefore, thus saith the Lord, Behold I lay in Zion a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation, he that believeth shall not make haste; judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet, and the nail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters

\* In using this word, as well as the Greek *GEENNA*, I have followed the Greek orthography when applying them as *Greek words*. When Englishised they should be aspirated and pronounced *hades* and *gehenna*.

shall overflow the hiding place, and your counsel with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand." Would any person, from the use here made of the word hell, undertake to prove that it implied a place of never ending, unmerciful punishment? We presume no one would undertake it; for it can have no such explanation. We do not make it our province to treat of every passage, at large, which we quote. To do this would require volumes to be written. The probable meaning in short is this: The Rulers of Jerusalem being men of blood thirsty dispositions, had, as we may say, made an agreement with death and the place of the dead; no indeed with death and hell as persons, could they be supposed to treat; but they had probably agreed to destroy all, who opposed their caprice, and flattered themselves, that this they would do effectually, by putting them to death and confining them in the grave. But what does God say to their impious covenant? "I lay in Zion a foundation;" or in other words, I have provided a Redeemer from the powers of the grave, who after laying in hell himself three days, shall rise a conqueror over all the powers of darkness—the first fruits of them that sleep. And your counsel with death, shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell, shall not stand.

*Isaiah lvii. 9.* "And thou wentest to the king with ointment, and didst increase thy perfumes, and didst send thy messengers far off, and didst debase thyself even unto hell. The word, as here used, instead of intimating that he so debased himself as to go to endless torments; simply intimates, that he humbled himself to the dust, or that he brought down his mind deep in the vale of humility.

*Ezekiel xxxi. 16, 17.* "In the day when he went down to the grave, I caused a mourning. I made the nations to shake at the sound of his fall, when I cast him down to hell with them that descend into the pit. They also went down into hell with him unto them that are slain with the sword." The words grave, hell, and the pit, here used, are of the same signification, and mean the same place—the grave, or state of the dead in general.

*Ezekiel xxxii. 21 and 27.* "The strong among the mighty shall speak to him out of the midst of hell with them that help him: they are gone down, they lie uncircumcised, slain by the sword. And they shall not lie with the mighty that are fallen of the uncircumcised which are gone down to hell with their weapons of war." The fact, that the word hell as here used does not suggest to us a place of everlasting misery in another world, is evident from the circumstance that the mighty, slain by the sword lie there with their "weapons of war." Surely it is no solid reason that a man should be consigned to eternal punishment, merely because he was "slain with the sword;" for this might happen as it often has happened, to the most virtuous and patriotic. Neither can we conceive, that if the hell here spoken of, means the future state of the damned, how they could take their "weapons of war with them." It means the place of the dead. And the strong bold language of which the scriptures make frequent use, justifies the expression, "they shall speak to him out of the midst of hell."

*Amos ix. 2.* "Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence shall mine hand bring them down." Supposing that by hell is here meant the regions of eternal damnation, do you, friendly reader, suppose that any who dig into it, will ever see the hand of God extended "to take them out?" Or if by heaven is here intended the state of happy souls in eternity, do you suppose the hand of God will ever "bring them down?" No. It is figurative language shewing that in no place whatever can man go out of the presence of his Maker. If he dig into hell, or the depths of the earth, from thence, (and not from future everlasting misery) will God bring him up;—Though he soar on the wings of the eagle, far from the earth into the literal heav-

ens, thence shall God bring him down. "I will exalt him that debaseth himself, and I will bring down him that is of an high heart."

*Jonah ii. 2.* "Out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice." You will readily perceive, that the hell here mentioned can no more mean, a place of endless distress in the future world, than any of the passages which we have already examined. It is the belly of the fish, in which Jonah was confined for three days and three nights.

*Habak. ii. 5.* "Because he (the King of Chaldea) transgresseth by wine, he is a proud man, neither keepeth at home, who enlargeth his desire as hell and as death, and cannot be satisfied, but gathereth unto him all nations, and heapeth unto him all people." Is there any thing in this verse which defines the word hell to signify a place of eternal distress? Is there any more reason for giving it that sense, than to give the same to the word "death?" There is not. The use of this word is so near the sense of it as found in Prov. xxvii. 20, that we refer you to our remarks on that passage for our opinion on this.

We have now gone through with examining all the passages in the Old Testament in which the word hell is found; and we have found no passage, which, in its most obvious sense, does not refer us to a place or condition in this world. In our next we shall begin with the New-Testament.

#### ORIGEN.

#### FOR THE INQUIRER.

BERNARDSTON, DEC. 29, 1823.

TO THE REV. TIMOTHY ROGERS.

Dear Sir,—I address you this letter solely for the interest of truth. I understand, by one of your hearers yesterday, that you represented the doctrine of universal salvation in a light which the present state of that doctrine does not justify. On the supposition that you are not aware what the doctrine in question is, as now believed and promulgated in this country, I think it my duty to make a statement of it to you, that you may be enabled to correct any wrong representation of it which you may have inadvertently made, and which you will, unquestionably, be ready to do, as you value the cause of the gospel and of Christ.

I am not informed that you named Universalism in your discourse, but that you was well understood to mean it, (which amounts to the same thing) and that you represented it as resting on the proposition, that Christ, by his death, had paid the debt which the sins of men constitute; and that they are, in consequence, exonerated from the penalty of the law, which otherwise they must have suffered. If this were your representation, sir, it is as far from the doctrine of Universalism, as it is now held and advocated by its professors, generally, in this country, and particularly by the writer of this letter, (who feels directly interested in your representation) as it could have been. The doctrine which we advocate is, that all mankind will be saved by being made alive in Christ, even as they die in Adam,

"Our life is hid with Christ in God; and because he lives (not because he died) we shall live also." Therefore the death of Christ, simply considered, does nothing towards salvation. Had Christ remained dead, instead of rising from the dead, there had been no salvation by Christ. I maintain, sir, that mankind never did, and never will, exist but in two states; viz. the natural and spiritual, or earthly and heavenly; and that, when the earthly is finished, by the dissolution of the body, there is nothing further of sin and suffering, for the reason that there is no other state but the heavenly. I maintain, (and so do most of my brethren in the faith) that all men are rewarded, in their natural earthly state, according to their works; and that none are, by any means, saved from any punishment which

their sins ever did or ever will deserve. To this doctrine, thus stated, I am not only willing, but I invite you to object, if you have aught on divine authority against it; and I should be extremely happy if you would consent to occupy our Universalist Meeting-House, in this place, for the purpose. I engage that it should be at your service, at almost any time that you should be pleased to name, and that the Universalists, generally, with myself, would attend, and lend you a respectful and candid hearing. I engage this, with the privilege of replying to you, either at the time or subsequently, in the same form. I make this proposal on the principle of doing to others as you wish them to do to you; for I certainly should esteem it a great privilege to be indulged in the same way, for the sake of my Redeemer. To close my letter, I would observe, that I am not sensible that I have ever advanced any thing, in my preaching in this place, which might be understood to have respect to the doctrine you advocate, except on Christmas-evening; and then I simply stated where-in my views are different, in regard to Christ, from those of your order; and I pledge my honor, that if I did then, or at any other time which I may not now recollect, misrepresent your doctrine, I will embrace the first opportunity to rectify the mistake, as putively as it was made.

I remain, very respectfully, dear sir,  
your friend &c.

JOHN BROOKS.

P. S.—Please to indulge me with a reply.

*From the same, to the same.*

BERNARDSTON, JAN. 30, 1824,

Sir,—Although you have not seen fit to notice the letter I addressed to you on the 29th ult. yet I feel it incumbent upon me to make some further remarks on the same subject. It must be known to you, that some of the leading members of your society had manifested a degree of bitterness against me, which evinced their determination, if possible, to drive me from this place, previous to the public attack which you made on the sentiments, which your strictures would lead them to suppose I advocate. This circumstance, together with certain tokens of marked neglect and disapprobation, which you have yourself repeatedly discovered towards me, you must be sensible would naturally tend to fix in my mind the impression, that the representation which you made, in your preaching, of the doctrine of Universalism, was designed to answer a purpose, at least, unfavorable to my personal interest. To this I certainly would submit, with the best grace in my power, could I see any justifiable reason for either your procedure, or that of your people. But I declare, before God, that I have not, knowingly and intentionally, done any thing, or said any thing, in relation to you, to your people, or your sentiments, which ought to provoke any ill-will on your or their part, and, more especially, which ought to have drawn from you a representation of my sentiments which is entirely erroneous. Nor can I, sir, conceive of any reason which could be assigned, on your part, which any candid christian would consider a justification for dressing a doctrine in false colors. God knoweth that blind mortals are sufficiently opposed to the truth, in Jesus, without being stimulated to opposition by their teachers. God knoweth that they are liable enough to receive wrong impressions, concerning his doctrine, without their being designedly made. Therefore I think it is no more than fair, and right, and reasonable, if it be not your imperious duty, as a professed christian and public teacher, to come forward and correct the wrong representation, which you have made of the doctrine of universal salvation, and that as publicly, at least, as it was made. You must be sensible, that, if you decline, and refuse to give any sort of explanation, it will naturally be concluded that you are capable of propagating error, not to say falsehood, intentionally; which no one, who is personally acquainted with you,

would be willing to allow. Beside these considerations, a very fair opportunity is presented, in the case, for testing the truth of the doctrine which is ostensibly assailed, and which I conceive no faithful servant of Christ ought to suffer to pass away unimproved. If the doctrine of universal salvation be not of dangerous tendency, being erroneous, it ought surely not to have been assailed by you. If it be of dangerous tendency, being erroneous, it surely ought not to be suffered to prevail, if the ministers and servants of Christ can resist, and stay its progress; and they ought not to consider it irresistible until they have put forth their utmost efforts against it. Surely you will not consider what little you have done, all that you can do, or all that duty requires you to do, for the overthrow of an error which you would consider of everlasting importance. Therefore, if you will do no more, it must be understood, either that you do not consider the error of Universalism of very great consequence, or that you owe, in resistance to a very dangerous error, only what you can do in a single, and not very long sermon; or, that your few remarks on the subject, though not at all applicable to the case, are sufficient forever to guard the good people of this place against being contaminated thereby. If the latter be your conclusion, and it be a correct one, we may felicitate ourselves on the vast amelioration of the state of society since the days of the Apostle Paul. He found it necessary, not only when he did speak to speak to the purpose, but to dispute, daily, in the streets and market places; and he found it necessary to carry his zeal so far as to dispute, about the space of two whole years, in one place; viz. in the school of Tyrannus. How comparatively easy your task, if, instead of being under the necessity of adopting such an open and persevering course of disputation, in defence of the truth, you can accomplish the whole of your duty in something less than thirty minutes! Yea and that too without putting yourself to any particular trouble to have your remarks appropriate, and consistent with the real facts in the case! Really this is an age of inaction, if not of ease and rest, to the professed people of God! Were it not for the danger of incurring the charge of sacrilege, or blasphemy, I should be tempted to apply to the present state of Universalists, and their enemies, the words of Moses. (Exod. xv. 9, 16.) "The enemy said I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil: my lust shall be satisfied upon them: I will draw my sword; my hand shall destroy them.—Fear and dread shall fall upon them: by the greatness of thine arm they shall be as still as a stone, till thy people pass over, O Lord, till the people pass over which thou hast purchased." There is a spiritual as well as a natural Egypt, (Rev. xii. 3.) in which the redeemed of the Lord are groaning in bondage. There is also a spiritual Red Sea, or "great gulph," through which they must pass to the heavenly Canaan, the city of the living God. From time to time the waters are separated, and multitudes return, and come to zion, with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads. Others, having temporal rule and dominion in Egypt, and glorying in the greatness of their power, and ability to oppress, seeing their slaves escaping, say, "We will pursue, we will overtake, we will divide the spoil." Heretofore their temerity has generally brought them into the midst of the deep; where, like Pharaoh and his host, they have been overwhelmed. But they are becoming more wary, and often, after a trifling show of disapprobation, they remain "as still as a stone." Undoubtedly, in process of time, all whom the Lord hath purchased with his blood, (and "by the grace of God he tasted death for every man") will pass over to the heavenly city: for "the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established upon the tops of the mountains, and exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it." "And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast—swallow up death in victory, and take away the rebuke of his people from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it."

Dear Sir, I have not the least doubt but that you and I,

together with the societies to which we now minister, will have the unspeakable happiness of spending an eternity together, in feasting on the divine things which God hath prepared for us, and all people; and, having this faith, hope, and expectation, I desire to live in peace with you, with your people, and with all men; and I certainly will do it as much as in me lies; though, when duty calls, I hope I shall not be backward in standing forth in vindication of the blessed gospel of God our Saviour.

Your servant for Jesus sake.

J. B.

## RELIGIOUS INQUIRER.

SATURDAY, Feb. 21, 1824.

### TO THE PATRONS OF THE RELIGIOUS INQUIRER.

The editor having removed to the City of Hudson, necessarily resigns the management of this paper. In doing which, he feels it to be his duty to return his thanks to those, who through personal friendship have exerted themselves in obtaining subscribers to this work, and to the subscribers in general, who have given a liberal support, that has exceeded the most sanguine expectations of the friends and proprietors of the Inquirer.

In retiring from the editorial department, the editor has the pleasing satisfaction of believing, that the manner in which the paper has been conducted, has given general satisfaction to its numerous patrons, and that his labors have not been in vain. That the Inquirer has been the means of conveying the knowledge of divine truth to many who had long groped in the darkness of superstitious ignorance—to confirm many weak and wavering minds; to give consolation to mourners, and to enkindle in the bosom of the true believer, that celestial joy, which is produced by a demonstration of the divine goodness.

The editor cannot refrain from expressing a wish that the INQUIRER which commenced under the most favorable auspices, and which has prospered thus far, will continue to possess a liberal patronage, and be the vehicle by which SOUND DOCTRINE shall be promulgated in the world, and that the light of divine truth reflected from its columns, will illuminate thousands of benighted minds who now live in the frozen regions of Calvinistic ELECTION and REPROBATION, or wander in the gloom of Arminianism.

### NOTICE.

The patrons of the "RELIGIOUS INQUIRER," are informed, that a competent gentleman will soon be engaged to take charge of the editorial department of this paper; until which time, it will be conducted by a committee of the Association.

\* \* Those friends, who are in the habit of corresponding with the former editor of this paper, on [private] business, are requested to direct their letters to Hudson, N. Y. All Communications and Letters concerning this office will be directed to the Printer, as usual.

*From the (Boston) Universalist Magazine.*

### GENERAL CONCLUSION, OR THE CONCLUSION OF THE WHOLE MATTER.

"*But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and the prophets; and have hope towards God, which they themselves allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.*"—Acts xxiv. 14, 15.

In almost every age of the world, it has been the lot of public men, to suffer by evil report and good; to be considered as deceivers, and yet true. This Paul well knew, while engaged in preaching the truth as it is in Jesus. Though a faithful servant of God; yet by his brethren the Jews, he was represented as a pestilent fellow, a mover of sedition, mad, beside himself, and an *heretic*. This last charge he readily confessed; but his heresy, he declared, contained in it, worship as his fathers worshipped, belief in all the prophets, with an hope of the resurrection of all men, just and unjust.

Almost every denomination of religious people have charged each other with heresy; and there is scarcely a minister on earth, but has been by more or less charged with heresy. It has been the writer's lot to share largely in this charge, from various directions.

My first knowledge of what is now called doctrine, was what is named *Calvinism*; or that God has predetermined the eternal salvation of a few, and excluded from the possibility of salvation, all others of the human race. This system was too narrow and short for my mind, and altogether opposite to the manifestation of God in all his ways to men.

The second step, or advance of my mind was to what is now called *Arminianism*; or that God loved all; that Christ died for all; and then left it to men, whether they would be saved or not. This, in my mind, left all at uncertainty—as to coming to the knowledge of truth, or in the end obtaining eternal life.

Viewing the broad foundation laid in the love of God; the fulness of Christ; the situation of all men; the extent of the prophecies and promises, I was led to conclude that it would be as much wisdom in God to save all in the end, as it was wisdom to make and preserve them in this world, and give them all things richly to enjoy.

The two first systems, have in times past been termed *heresies*, yea, damnable heresies; but those days are past, and these systems have by age become popular; they are now called sound doctrines, "*The doctrines of grace*"; but the last, that every man shall be presented faultless,—this, is considered damnable doctrine; the doctrine of devils; heretical doctrine, a doctrine calculated to lead men by millions to endless misery! So great an heresy, that all who believe it, believe a lie, and must be damned forever.

Into this *heresy* my mind was pleasingly led, by believing all things written in the law and the prophets, who uniformly declared "*restitution of all things*"—when the mystery of God shall be finished;—in this I lived, and this I preached, six years,—having hope towards God, as it respects the resurrection of all men to glory, honor, immortality, and eternal life.

From various causes, separate from the scriptures, (about six months ago) I gave up the doctrine as *doubtful*, and endeavored to preach a limited salvation; but never preached endless misery; a doctrine not named in the Bible. While laboring to work my mind into a partial doctrine—I was obliged to pass by all those glorious prophecies, which speak of endless blessings to all nations—and in the time, took particular notice of the situation of people who thought mankind would be eternally separated,

and a part miserable forever. I saw them divided among themselves, and miserable with all their religion.

After a long struggle, as Nebuchadnezzar said, my understanding came unto me, and all appeared plain. My mind is now more clearly instructed than ever in this glorious truth ; *That God has given Jesus power over all flesh, for this purpose, that he should give ALL FLESH eternal life.* The following are some of the reasons for thus believing ;—

1. This accords with the manifestation God has made of himself to all nations, in all ages of the world. The sun rises and shines on the evil and good, and the rain is sent on the just, and unjust. All are in this life treated as his creatures, and as the children of his love. These things cannot be denied. This is his witness to all nations ;—He does good to all, sends them rain and fruitful seasons, and fills their hearts with food and gladness. He cannot deal otherwise with all men in another state, unless his mind towards men is changed. He is of one mind, does according to his will ;—is the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning.

2. A belief in the eternal salvation of all men ; or that they will be delivered from sin, misery, mortality, and death, best agrees with the condition of all men.—All are God's offspring ;—he is the former of our bodies and Father of our spirits ;—the God of the spirits of all flesh ;—all souls are his,—all are under sin—all have gone out of the way—He has concluded all under sin, that he might have mercy upon all. All are in one condition by nature, and to save a part, and reject the remainder, or leave them to work their own ruin, would be partiality, and contrary to that wisdom from above, that is "without partiality."

3. This belief agrees with the desire God has implanted in the hearts of all good men, or such as have come to the knowledge of the truth in Jesus. All men who pray in the Holy Ghost, pray that all may be saved. He who has taught them thus to pray, must design to answer that request which he has taught them to make.

4. This belief gives us encouragement for the most wretched and miserable. It includes the chief of sinners, and though they may be our enemies, yet we are led to love them, knowing God loves them, and that he will finally make them his friends and ours, and bring them where they shall enjoy him, and all others.

5. This belief leads to the destruction of that spirit of party, persecution, and want of love to each other, which is so manifest among sectarian and limitarians in every part of the world, where people profess to believe in partial salvation. This leads us to ask, "Are we better than they ?"—"Is he the God of the Jews only ? Is he not of the Gentiles also ?" This leads men to unite in great things, and not to divide on account of things in themselves indifferent.

6. This belief leads us to honor God, as the Saviour of all men, and to view Christ as the Saviour of the world, not only in word, but in deed and truth. And it is the best calculated to lead men to repentance, faith, and obedience, of any doctrine ever preached to mankind.

7. The *restitution* of all things is what all the prophets speak of since the world began. This is the general testimony of all the scriptures. To Shiloh shall the gathering of the people be. In Christ shall all the nations of the earth be blessed. "Men shall be blessed in him, all nations shall call him blessed." "All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord ; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee. All they that be fat upon the earth shall eat and worship ; all they that go down to the dust shall bow before him ; and none can keep alive his own soul."—Psalms xxii. 27, 29. "And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things—He will swallow up death in victory ; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces."—Isa. xlv. 6—8.

The scriptures foretell an end of transgression and sin—That all shall be gathered together in one in Christ—That all in heaven and earth shall be reconciled in Christ—That all shall in Christ be made alive, who die in Adam ; and that all who have borne the image of Adam, shall bear the image of Christ—That all shall bow before him, and confess him Lord to the glory of God, and that every creature in existence shall, to the approbation of the four and twenty elders, sing, Worthy is the Lamb. That God's will shall be done in earth as in heaven. This cannot be, until there shall be none sinners, none mortal, or dead.

How glorious ! How suitable to man ! How honorable to God ! In what harmony with the angels' song ! In what harmony with the Saviour's declaration, to give all flesh eternal life.

"Here will I set up my rest,  
My fluctuating heart,  
From the haven of his breast  
Shall never more depart."

These things are faithful and true, and will stand forever.

Many are now waiting for a communication from me through some public paper; this is what my mind is settled upon as the *Truth* contained in the Scriptures. I have no war with any man, nor with any sect or denomination; they are all God's offspring, and included in the number to be blest in Christ Jesus. I do not belong to any limited sectarians on earth, but to the general assembly and church of the first born that are written in heaven.

It is my choice, and my greatest happiness to be reckoned among those *preachers* and *believers* who preach and believe Christ will save from sin and death, Adam, Eve, and all their descendants, and hope so to live, that my connexion with them may be for our mutual good, and the increase of the knowledge of that grace which more abounds than sin.

May the preachers of this "good tidings" "be ever clothed with salvation"—may these watchmen see eye to eye, lift up their voices, and sing for joy of heart. May all believers in this true grace of God, prove by their conversation and lives, that the doctrine they embrace is the doctrine according to godliness.

May knowledge increase, hurtful divisions be done away and all unite to crown the Saviour of the world—*Lord of ALL.*

ELIAS SMITH.

Boston, January 19, 1824.

*From the (Canandaigua) Plain Truth.*

#### SALARY OFFICERS.

The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, have provided a snug birth, and a handsome salary for J. Evarts, Esq. their corresponding Secretary. Here is an extract from the proceedings of the annual meeting :

"The committee recommended that the sum of ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS be granted to Jeremiah Evarts, Esq. as Corresponding Secretary of the Board ; and that the further sum of ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS be allowed to him as Editor of the *Missionary Herald*. \*\*\* This report was accepted."

Two thousand dollars a year exceed in amount the salary of either governor in five of the eastern states. Rhode-Island and Connecticut contained in 1820, 358,000 inhabitants—yet the annual salary of Secretary Evarts far surpasses the united salaries of the governors of these two states. The governors of New-Hampshire and Vermont, have each an annual salary of \$1000—Secretary Evarts has \$2000 per annum. What can be the arduous duties of his office ? He is allowed \$1000 a year for editing the *Missionary Herald*, a work which has more buyers than readers. It is nearly destitute of original matter—and re-

quires no more talent to conduct it than to turn a grind-stone. But the orthodox committee give their reasons. Let them speak for themselves.

"The principal reasons were, in brief, that the Corresponding Secretary should, in order to the uninterrupted discharge of the duties of his office, *be free from care and anxiety as to providing the means of support for his family; and that the sum specified is no more than a suitable support.*"

Many of our honest farmers in the country look upon \$2000 as a great estate. Who, that has a family, is free from care and anxiety? Our credulous contributors have hitherto supposed that the avails of their toil and sweat went to aid in the conversion of British Hindoos—and not to fatten Boston Bond-street loungers.

*From the (Boston) Universalist Magazine.*

The following letter was taken from a manuscript in the possession of the present family of KELLY, now in Lord Kelly's Library, which was taken from the original letter of Plebius Lentulus, at Rome.

#### A CHRISTIAN.

*Letter of Plebius Lentulus to the Senate of Rome, concerning Jesus Christ.*

It being the usual custom of Roman Governors to advertise the Senate and people of such things as happened in their Provinces, in the days of the Emperor Tiberius Caesar. Plebius Lentulus, President of Judea, wrote the following Epistle to the Senate, concerning our Saviour.

"There appeared in these our days a man of great virtue, named JESUS CHRIST, who is yet living among us, and of the Gentiles is accepted for a prophet of truth, but his own disciples call him the Son of God—he raiseth the dead, and cureth all manner of diseases. A man of stature somewhat tall and comely, with very reverend countenance, such as the beholders both love and fear,—his hair of the color of a chestnut full ripe, plain to his ears, whence downward it is more orient, curling and waving about his shoulders.—In the midst of his head is a seam, or partition of his hair, after the manner of the Nazarites—His forehead plain and very delicate—His face without spot or wrinkle, beautified with a lovely red—His nose and mouth so formed, as nothing can be reprehended—His beard thickish, in color like his hair, not very long, but forked—His look innocent and mature—His eyes grey, clear and quick. In reproving he is terrible—in admonishing, courteous and fair spoken—pleasant in conversation, mixed with gravity.—It cannot be remembered that any have seen him laugh—but many have seen him weep.—In proportion of body most excellent—His hands and arms most delectable to behold. In speaking very temperate, modest and wise. A man, for his singular beauty, surpassing the children of men."

PLEBIUS LENTULUS.

*From the (N. Y.) Gospel Herald.*

#### AWFUL WARNINGS!

In Georgetown, (N. H.) Mr. Benjamin Stevens, aged 63, fell dead, while in the act of carrying a quarter of meat as a present to his minister.

We give this in orthodox style. Preachers of terror convert the most common occurrences into judgments. Now we have as good authority for saying this man died in consequence of carrying meat to give his minister, as they have for their *Awful Warnings*. However, we are bound in justice to say, that the deceased was engaged in a laudable employment, if his minister was poor. If the case was otherwise, we do not conceive the sin to be so heinous as to call for the special interposition of offended Heaven.

#### POETRY.

##### [SELECTED.]

##### EXTRACT FROM "AIRS OF PALESTINE."

IN what rich harmony, what polish'd lays,  
Should MAN address thy throne, when NATURE pays  
Her wild, her tuneful tribute to the sky!  
Yes, Lord, she sings Thee, but she knows not why.  
The fountain's gush, the long resounding shore,  
The zephyr's whisper, and the tempest's roar,  
The rustling leaf, in autumn's fading woods,  
The wintry storm, the rush of vernal floods,  
The summer bow'r, by cool ng breezes lann'd.  
The torrent's fall, by dancing rainbows spann'd.  
The streamlet, gurgling through its rocky glen,  
The long grass, sighing o'er the graves of men,  
The bird that crests yon dew-bespangled tree,  
Shakes his bright plumes, and trills his descent free,  
The scorching bolt, that from thy armory hurl'd,  
Burns its red path, and cleaves a shrinking world ;—  
All these are music to Religion's ear ;—  
Music, thy hand awakes, for man to hear.  
Thy hand invested in their azure robes,  
Thy breath made buoyant yonder circling globes,  
That bound and blaze along the elastic wires,  
That, viewless, vibrates on celestial lyres,  
And in that high and radiant concave tremble,  
Beneath whose dome adoring hosts assemble,  
To catch the notes, from those bright spheres that flow,  
Which mortals dream of, but which angels know.

#### A REFLECTION AT SEA.

SEE how, beneath the moonbeam's smile,  
Yon little billow heaves its breast,  
And foams and sparkles, for a while,  
And murmuring then subsides to rest.

Thus MAN, the sport of life and care,  
Rises on time's eventful sea ;  
And, having swell'd a moment there,  
Thus melts into eternity !

#### JUST RECEIVED,

##### AND FOR SALE AT THIS OFFICE.

The UNIVERSALIST HYMN BOOK : a new collection of Psalms and Hymns, for the use of Universalist Societies.—(single or doz.)

##### BALLOU'S LECTURES.

Do. ELEVEN SERMONS.

Do. CATECHISM.

KNEELAND'S. Greek and English Testaments.

The History of the INQUISITION of Spain and Portugal.

An ESSAY ON MAN, by ALEXANDER POPE, Esq. to which is added, the UNIVERSAL PRAYER.

##### ALSO

A luminous discourse on the "*coming of Christ*," from 2 Thess. i. 6, 10, by Rev. J. S. THOMPSON, recently of the Methodist Persuasion.—Price, 3cts. singly.

And a number of other Pamphlets, favoring the doctrine of Universal Salvation.

PRINTED BY J. T. BEENE, SEMI-MONTHLY,

FOR THE PROPRIETORS.

A FEW RODS SOUTH OF THE LITTLE BRIDGE,  
AT ONE DOLLAR PER ANNUM—PAYABLE IN ADVANCE.